

As I Have Loved You

John 15:12 This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.

Introduction

We all need to learn how to love. But this world teaches us its own standard. The radio, the TV, and so many influences in society tell us to “look out for number one.” We have become part of the me generation.

We are created by God to be loving, relational beings. We can see this even from the very beginning of human development. We are created to be interdependent.

Example. Frogs lay eggs by the thousands because from the moment of hatching the tadpole has to take care of itself. Many do not survive. Once she lays the eggs, the mother’s job is finished. If God intended us to be independent, self-centered beings, He probably would have created us to begin life in the same way. But when a human baby is born it is completely dependent on the parents. The human family is a beautiful example of interdependence. Through the family, God wanted us to learn to love.

It is hard to find real love in this world. Because we turned from God, the source of love, in the beginning of human history, we have not known true love.

Who can teach us how to love? The schools? Movies? Our friends? To find God’s standard of love, we need to learn from one who knows God. Jesus came into this world knowing God’s love as no one ever had, and he came to teach us how to love.

Jesus’ Love

What kind of love did Jesus show?

1. Serving love. Jesus’ concern was completely other-directed. He always put others before himself. E.g., washing the disciples’ feet (John 13).
2. Sacrificial love. Jesus offered himself totally for the sake of the world. That Jesus gave his life for the sake of mankind is the greatest example of sacrificial love.
3. Forgiving love. Life is full of difficulty. We are not living in the ideal. This is not a loving world. And the pain of this life often causes the real opposite of love – resentment – to grow in our hearts.

Love can grow within us, deepening and broadening us. Resentment also grows within our hearts, but it is like poison that eats away at our ability to relate in a loving way.

Look at all the historical resentment in this world. Black-white, Protestant-Catholic, Korean-Japanese; resentments between races, religions, and cultures; there is so much historical resentment. Jesus taught us how to overcome resentment.

Love Your Enemies

Jesus said to love your enemies, and to bless those who persecute you. And he not only said it, but he lived it as well. When the whole world stood against him, mocked him, killed him, Jesus said, "Father, forgive them." In this Jesus taught us how to overcome resentment. We must forgive those who hurt us, and heal our relationships.

It is not easy to forgive. But if we know the love of Jesus, we can find the strength. Jesus said that we must love one another as he loved us. If Jesus, who was pure and without blame, could forgive us, can't we also? Often the blame for hurtful relationships falls on both parties. But Jesus was completely pure, and there was no justification for the persecution he received. Certainly he could have resented the chosen people. But instead he forgave them and us.

Example. Pope John Paul II visited the man who tried to kill him, and forgave him. That image of forgiving love is so powerful in this resentful world.

Conclusion

Jesus said that we should love one another as he has loved us. We see that the kind of love that Jesus taught is a serving love, a sacrificial love, and a forgiving love. If we feel the love of Jesus in our hearts, we can also strive to give that same kind of love in all of our relationships.